

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2265

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 7117

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, PFOR, JA, UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET COMMENTS ON SIBERIAN DEVELOPMENT

SUMMARY: SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN GAVE UPBEAT SPEECH MAY 28 SUPPORTING JAPAN AND U.S. COOPERATION IN DEVELOPMENT OF SIVERIAN RESOURCES. AT ABOUT SAME TIME SOVIET OIL MINISTER REPORTEDLY ISSUED STATEMENT IN MOSCOW SAYING SOVIETS HAD NEVER NEGOTIATED WITH JAPAN ON OIL SALES AND WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTY INCREASING OIL EXPORTS. LATTER STATEMENT SUBSEQUESNTLY "CLARIFIED" BY USSR, BUT FONOFF VIEWS WHOLE EPISODE AS SOVIET TACTIC TO SPEED UP JAPANESE CONSIDERATION OF SIBERIAN PROJECTS. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING PAST SEVERAL DAYS SOVIET REPRESENTATIVES HAVE MADE SEVERAL STATEMENTS ON SIBERIAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. FIRST SUCH STATEMENT WAS SPEECH GIVEN BY SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN OLEG TROYANOVSKY ON MAY 28. TROYANOVSKY BEGAN BY NOTING PROGRESS TOWARD PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE THAT HAD BEEN MADE BY US AND USSR. HOWEVER, HE CASTIGATED THOSE WITHIN U.S. THAT WOULD TIE ISSUE TO CREDITS FOR SIBERIAN PROJECTS WITH AN EFFORT TO INTERFERE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE SOVIET UNION. TROYANOVSKY THEN OUTLINED STATUS OF SIX SIBERIAN DEVOLOPMENT PROJECTS UNDER CONSIDERATION BETWEEN JAPAN AND USSR MENTIONING THAT (A) SAKHARLIN OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION PROJECT COULD BE CONCLUDED IN JUNE (B) JAPANESE NOW CONSIDERING SOVIET PROPOSALS ON TYUMEN OIL PROJECT AND (C) PROGRESS ON YAKUTSK GAS EXPLORATION PROJECT DEPENDED ENTIRELY ON

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U.S. ATTITUDES. RE LATTER PROJECT, TROYANOVSKY ADDED

THAT JAPANESE HAD SIGNED LETTER OF INTENT LAST FALL TO THE EFFECT THAT IF TRILATERAL CONCEPT OF COOPERATION PROVED UNWORKABLE, JAPANESE HAD AGREED THAT THEY WOULD PROCEED WITH PROJECT ON A BILATERAL USSR - JAPAN BASIS. (THIS POINT EMPHATICALLY DENIED IN LATER CONVERSATION BETWEEN EMBOFF AND EXECUTIVE V.P. OF TOKYO GAS). REFERRING TO RECENT SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR NEW TRANS-SIBERIAN RAILWAY, TROYANOVSKY SAID THIS OFFERED WIDE NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE USSR IN EXPLOITATION OF SIBERIAN RESOURCES--POSSIBILITIES WHICH WOULD NOT EXIST WITHOUT THE RAILWAY. GENERAL TONE OF SPEECH STRONGLY SUPPORTED U.S. AND JAPANESE COOPERATION IN DEVELOPMENT OF SIBERIAN RESOURCES.

2. SHORTLY BEFORE TROYANOVSKY STATEMENT, SOVIET OIL MINISTER VALENTIN SHASHIN ISSUED STATEMENT IN MOSCOW OF COMPLETELY DIFFERENT CHARACTER. SHASHIN REPORTEDLY SAID THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO NEGOTIATIONS WITH JAPAN REGARDING OIL SALES, DESPITE WHAT JAPANESE MIGHT BELIEVE. ADDED THAT USSR WOULD HAVE DIFFICULT IN EXPANDING ITS OIL EXPORTS AS PRODUCTION ROSE IN NEXT FEW YEARS. WHEN ASKED ABOUT SHASHIN STATEMENT DURING QUESTION PERIOD AFTER HIS SPEECH, TROYANOVSKY SAID HE UNAWARE OF STATEMENT BUT STRESSED THAT SOVIET POLICY OF SUPPORTING JAPANESE COOPERATION IN SIBERIA HAD NOT CHANGED.

3. DESPITE TROYANOVSKY'S REASSURANCE, SHASHIN STATEMENT CAUSED CONSIDERABLE CONFUSION IN JAPAN. SEVERAL PRESS REPORTS INTERPRETED STATEMENT AS SIGN OF IRRITATION IN SOVIET UNION WITH SLOW PACE OF PROGRESS ON PROJECTS, PARTICULARLY TYUMEN OIL PROJECT. CONFUSION COMPOUNDED BY FACT THAT USSR SOURCES, IN MAY 29 INTERVIEW WITH JAPANESE CORRESPONDENT IN MOSCOW, CLAIMED THAT SHASHIN STATEMENT HAD BEEN INCORRECTLY TRANSLATED IN ORIGINAL INTERVIEW WITH U.S. CORRESPONDENTS, AND THAT IN FACT SHASHIN HAD MEANT THAT USSR MAY BE PREPARED TO SELL OIL TO JAPAN.

4. ASKED ABOUT SOVIET STATEMENTS, DEPUTY HEAD OF
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FONOFF FIRST EAST EUROPEAN DIV. (SOVIET AFFAIRS), NOMURA, SAID THESE REPRESENTED ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF SOVIET CARROT-AND-STICK TACTICS TO SPEED UP JAPANESE CONSIDERATION OF SIBERIAN PROJECTS.
SHOESMITH

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